

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 SOE-02
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NSF-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9955
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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DEPT PASS EPA FOR SHOSTAL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV, PINT, PGOV, EGEN, TGEN, UR
SUBJECT: NEW STATE COMMITTEE FORMED TO COORDINATE ENVIRON-
MENTAL PROTECTION EFFORTS

1. ON MARCH 31 SOVIET PRESS REPORTED THAT THE PRESIDUM
OF THE SUPREME SOVIET HAD TRANSFORMED THE FORMER MAIN
ADMINISTRATION FOR HYDROMETEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (HYDROMET)
INTO THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR HYDROMETEOROLOGY AND CONT-
ROL OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.

2. ON APRIL 3 EMBOFF DISCUSSED THE CHANGE WITH
YURIY KAZAKOV OF HYDROMET, WHO IS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF
THE US-USSR ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENT. KAZAKOV SAID THAT
THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WILL BE THE CHIEF AGENCY IN THE
SOVIET GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING ALL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EFFORTS. THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE
WILL APPARENTLY HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANNING FUTURE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS, FOR MONITORING CURRENT
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, AND WILL ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
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APPROVING ALL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FACILITIES AND
INSTALLATIONS IN ALL NEW INDUSTRIAL AND MUNICIPAL CONSTRUC-
TION. KAZAKOV NOTED THAT THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WILL
CORRESPOND IN PART TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
AND NATIONAL OCEANS AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE
US. KAZAKOV EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH THE FORMA-
TION OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE, COMMENTING "THIS IS

SOMETHING FOR WHICH WE HAVE STRUGGLED FOR YEARS." KAZAKOV NOTED THAT YURIY IZRAEL', PRESENT CHAIRMAN OF HYDROMET, WILL PROBABLY BE NAMED HEAD OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE; HOWEVER, KAZAKOV ADDED THAT THIS QUESTION STILL REMAINS TO BE DECIDED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

3. KAZAKOV STATED THAT NO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BODIES WHICH ARE PRESENTLY UNDER THE JURISDICTIONS OF OTHER .MINISTRIES OR AGENCIES HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE. KAZAKOV, HOWEVER, NOTED THAT SUCH TRANSFERS MIGHT OCCUR IN THE FUTURE. KAZAKOV ALSO STATED THAT THE SOVIET BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION HAS NOT BEEN INCREASED; HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT FORMATION OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE MIGHT LEAD TO AN - INCREASE IN THE FUTURE. IN THIS CONNECTION, KAZAKOV NOTED - THAT THE ALLOCATION OF APPROXIMATELY ELEVEN BILLION RUBLES , FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE PRESENT FIVE YEAR PLAN CHIEFLY COVERS THE COST OF NEW EQUIPMENT FOR CURRENTLY OPERATING PLANTS WHICH ARE FOUND IN VIOLATION OF POLLUTION STANDARDS. ANTI-POLLUTION EQUIPMENT FOR NEW PLANTS OR FACILITIES IS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET OF THE PARENT MINISTRY (OTHER HYDROMET OFFICIALS HAVE EARLIER TOLD US THAT THIS BUDGETARY ALLOCATION OF 11 BILLION RUBLES REPRESENTS ABOUT ONE TENTH OF ALL SOVIET EXPENDITURES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DURING THE CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLAN PERIOD; HOWEVER, WE ARE UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS ESTIMATE.) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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4. IN SPITE OF THE APPARENT INTENTION THAT THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE SERVE AS THE CHIEF COORDINATING BODY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EFFORTS, IT APPEARS THAT NUMEROUS OTHER SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS WILL RETAIN A FINGER IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PIE. FOR EXAMPLE, KAZAKOV STATED THAT THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WILL RETAIN APPROVAL AND FUNDING AUTHORITY FOR ALL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. IN ADDITION, THE STATE COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDS WILL RETAIN AUTHORITY FOR SETTING ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS, WHILE GOSPLAN WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALLOCATING FUNDS FOR NEW INVESTMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FACILITIES. HOWEVER, APPROVAL OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ALL NEW FACILITIES IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

5. KAZAKOV COMMENTED THAT FORMATION OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE SHOULD HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE OPERATION OF THE US-USSR ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENT, FOR WHICH HYDROMET HAD SERVED AS THE SOVIET LEAD AGENCY.

6. COMMENT: IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WILL REALLY BE ABLE TO PLAY AN EFFECTIVE ROLE IN COORDINATING THE HITHERTO DIVERSE SOVIET EFFORTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. THE NUMEROUS SOVIET

MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES WHICH PRESENTLY OWN A PIECE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION WOULD PROBABLY BE RELUCTANT TO SURRENDER THEIR AUTHORITY (AND PERSONNEL) TO THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE. INDEED, THE AIM OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE MAY NOT BE TO CONCENTRATE ALL EFFORTS UNDER ONE ROOF BUT SIMPLY TO ALLOW MORE EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AMONG THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES. KAZAKOV SEEMED TO INDICATE THIS INTENTION BY NOTING THAT WITHIN ITS SPHERE OF COMPETENCE A STATE COMMITTEE HAS THE POWER TO GIVE DIRECTIVES TO MINISTRIES. THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED AUTHORITY IN COMPARISON TO HYDROMET,

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WHICH WAS PRIMARILY A MONITORING AGENCY. HOWEVER, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE WOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE ITS WILL PREVAIL IN ANY POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION WITH THE HEAVY-WEIGHT PRODUCTION (AND POLLUTING) MINISTRIES. WE WILL PURSUE THE QUESTION OF ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES OF THE NEW STATE COMMITTEE DURING OUR NEXT MEETING WITH IZRAEL'. TOON

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